ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities, better capacity utilisation, improvement in productivity and maintaining good industrial relations.

Collapse of coalmines in Dhanbad

434. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who died in coal mines collapse, in Dhanbad during this year;

(b) the reasons for the collapse; and

(c) the steps taken to stop illegal mining?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) and (b) Five employees died in coal mines collapse, which was predominantly due to roof and side fall, in under-ground mines of Coal India Limited in the district of Dhanbad during the current calendar year (upto 25th May, 1998)

(c) Coal mining in the organised sector is carried out scientifically and in accordance with the various statutes laid down in this regard. However cases of illegal mining by antisocial elements occur from time to time. Control of illegal mining is squarely a law and order problem which can be tackled only by the respective State Governments acting through the local administration. However, some of the steps taken by the coal companies to check illegal mining are as below:—

(i) The coal companies maintain close liaison with the State/District authorities and the police to keep a check on illegal mining.

(ii) On receipt of information on illegal mining and after preliminary enquiry, a First Information Report is filed with the local police.

(iii) The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and the company's security personnel regularly patrol the areas where illegal mining have been reported earlier. The CISF, in association with local police, also conduct raids on illegal mining sites wherever information reaches the authorities.

(iv) As far as possible, the exposed coal face in workings are covered with debris.

(v) Surprise checks and raids are conducted at the illegal mining sites by the security staff of the coal compaies.

Illegal mining in Dhanbad coal mines

435. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Ministr of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal mining has been going on in Dhanbad coal mines; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to stop the activities of coal mafia in Eastern Coalfields Limited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY):

(a) and (b) Illegal mining activities in the nature of surreptious extraction and pilferage of coal from abandoned, closed and disussed mines and also from outcrop region have been reported from time to time from the coal mining area of Dhanbad.

The following steps are being taken for prevention of illegal mining in the leasehold areas:_

(i) round the clock vigil by the company's security personnel in the area prone to illegal mining.

(ii) patrolling by security/armed guards, surprise raids by the security staff and joint raids with State Police.

(iii) covering the vulnerable areas by information network and also by electronic communication network wherever possible,

(iv) development and maintenance of intelligence sources/informers for the surveillance and conducting raids.

(v) covering the exposed coal seams in abandoned open cast mines by dumping overburden and sealing of abandoned underground openings, and

(vi) filing FIRs with the respective police station and liaisioning with the State Government law enforcing authorities.

Information in regard to illegal mining outside the leasehold areas of the national is coal company is promptly given to the concerned State Administration for appropriate action.

Distribution of coal royalty

436. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether representations have been received against discrimination in distribution of coal royalty;